We claim:

1.   A method for translating a source language classification system into at least one target language, wherein said classification system classifies a communication into one of a plurality of predefined categories, comprising:

obtaining a sample response repository in said source language, wherein said sample response repository comprises a plurality of prior communications each having a classification;

applying a mechanical translation process to said sample response repository to generate a translated response repository; and

processing said translated response repository to generate a natural language understanding module that can classify a communication in said target language.

2.   The method of claim 1, wherein said natural language understanding process employs a statistical method.

3.   The method of claim 1, wherein said natural language understanding process employs a rule-base.

4.   The method of claim 3, wherein said rule-base defines one or more classification rules that determine how communications are classified.

5.   The method of claim 3, further comprising the step of applying a mechanical translation process to said rule-base to generate a rule-base in said target language.

6.   The method of claim 1, wherein said communication is a spoken utterance and wherein said method further comprises the step of applying a speech recognition statistical model compilation process to the translated target language response repository to generate a speech recognition module in the target language.

7.　　　　The method of claim 6, further comprising the step of applying a speech recognizer to said spoken utterance to convert said spoken utterance to text.

8.　　　　The method of claim 1, wherein said classification system routes said communication to one of a plurality of predefined destinations.

9.　　　　The method of claim 1, wherein said plurality of predefined categories are a plurality of subject areas.

10.　　　　An apparatus for translating a source language classification system into at least one target language, wherein said classification system classifies an utterance into one of a plurality of predefined categories, comprising:

a memory; and

at least one processor, coupled to the memory, operative to:

obtain a sample response repository in said source language, wherein said sample response repository comprises a plurality of prior communications each having a classification;

apply a mechanical translation process to said sample response repository to generate a translated response repository; and

processing said translated response repository to generate a natural language understanding module that can classify a communication in said target language.

11.　　　　The apparatus of claim 10, wherein said natural language understanding process employs a statistical method.

12.　　　　The apparatus of claim 10, wherein said natural language understanding process employs a rule-base.

13.　　　　The apparatus of claim 12, wherein said rule-base defines one or more classification rules that determine how communications are classified.

14.   The apparatus of claim 12, further comprising the step of applying a mechanical translation process to said rule-base to generate a rule-base in said target language.

15.   The apparatus of claim 10, wherein said communication is a spoken utterance and wherein said processor is further configured to apply a speech recognition statistical model compilation process to the translated target language response repository to generate a speech recognition module in the target language.

16.   The apparatus of claim 15, wherein said processor is further configured to apply a speech recognizer to said spoken utterance to convert said spoken utterance to text.

17.   The apparatus of claim 10, wherein said classification system routes said communication to one of a plurality of predefined destinations.

18.   The apparatus of claim 10, wherein said plurality of predefined categories are a plurality of subject areas.

19.   An article of manufacture for translating a source language classification system into at least one target language, wherein said classification system classifies an utterance into one of a plurality of predefined categories, comprising a machine readable medium containing one or more programs which when executed implement the steps of:

obtain a sample response repository in said source language, wherein said sample response repository comprises a plurality of prior communications each having a classification;

apply a mechanical translation process to said sample response repository to generate a translated response repository; and

process said translated response repository to generate a natural language understanding module that can classify a communication in said target language.

20.   The article of manufacture of claim 19, wherein said classification system routes said communication to one of a plurality of predefined destinations.

21.   The article of manufacture of claim 19, wherein said plurality of predefined categories are a plurality of subject areas.